

CHRISTMAS COMES TO BETHANY: John 11:1-16

1. Thinking back on this week's sermon, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. Given the significance of this miracle, why might John be the only Gospel account recording its occurrence?
3. The passage reassures us of the love of Jesus for Mary, Martha, and Lazarus despite their trial (vs 5). Have you ever questioned the love Jesus has for you during a time of suffering? What helped to bring you through that time?
4. How would you respond to the accusation that a God who glorifies in suffering cannot be loving?
5. While it is possible for good things to come without hardship, what beneficial result comes uniquely through suffering? Read Romans 5:3-5 and James 1:2-4 as a starting point for your answer.
6. What specific hardship are you experiencing right now that you need to bring to God in prayer, as a surrender to His glory? What has made it difficult to do so thus far?
7. For a Christian what does faith look like during suffering? What does it not look like?
8. Thomas' call to follow Jesus back into Judea evidently carried with it great risk (vs 16). How should believers evaluate what level of risk is necessary or appropriate as we follow Jesus?
9. This first week of advent celebrates faith. What tradition do you have (or could you begin) that incorporates faith this Christmas season?